

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY SHEET

City of Rollingwood

Meeting Date: December 18, 2024

City Council

Submitted By:

Staff

Agenda Item:

Discussion and possible action on a recommendation from the Utility Commission regarding grinder pumps

Description:

At the December 3, 2024 Utility Commission meeting, the Commission and staff discussed grinder pump maintenance, replacement and related expenses. The Utility Commission made the following motion:

Chris Kirksey moved to submit four options to City Council; maintain the status quo, propose a \$20 payment by the owner, propose a \$10 payment by the owner, or table the item until the rate study. Clark Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried with 4 in favor and 1 abstention (Meakin).

Background Information on Grinder Pumps shared with the Utility Commission:

Grinder pumps are located on private property and historically the city has paid for their maintenance and replacement. Attached is a breakdown of the city's costs related to grinder pumps between the months of August 2021 and October 2024. These costs only include what was paid to Crossroads, the City's Water and Wastewater Operator, and do not include any staff time spent responding to grinder pump-related calls. Below is a table that summarizes this data:

<u>Dates</u>	<u># of Months</u>	<u>Cost</u>
August to December 2021	5 Months	\$15,368
January to December 2022	12 Months	\$29,463
January to December 2023	12 Months	\$17,277
January to October 2024	11 Months	\$32,696

Questions about Grinder Pumps:

1. What is the average price of a grinder pump and much does it cost to replace one (labor, etc.)?

\$2,500 before tax. Time and labor always vary but you can predict \$405-\$1,000 if you're using Hydro Source.

2. What is the average lifespan of a grinder pump?

10-12 years if taken care of.

3. Does a grinder pump service only one home per pump or do they service multiple homes?

Each grinder pump only services one home.

4. How many calls for grinder pump maintenance were there in the last year?

Crossroads shows 24 calls in the past year. Sometimes Public Works Staff is able to resolve a grinder pump call without having to call in Crossroads, so there were likely more than 24 total calls in the past year.

5. What is the average price for a service call?

Crossroads can cost anywhere from \$150-500 depending on the nature of the call with time and labor. It always varies depending on the circumstance. Hydrosorce charges \$405 minimum per call. If they have to replace the grinder pump the cost is \$2,700 at a minimum.

6. Does Crossroads/City Staff have any information on the types of maintenance being performed on the grinder pumps or the cause of the calls for maintenance?

Response from Crossroads: The most common calls are for failed pumps. The second most common calls are for electrical failure.

7. How many of the calls for grinder pump maintenance result from the pump being worn out versus improper items being flushed?

Response from Crossroads: All the calls were for worn out pump or electrical issues. (this obviously could have been caused by improper items being flushed) but all of our descriptions or details on the calls are for pumps not working correctly, or pump failed.

8. Do we have repeat offenders for maintenance calls?

There are some grinder pumps that have required maintenance more than once.

9. When were the grinder pumps purchased?

Unsure but investigating. The purchase dates will vary pump to pump.

10. If we were to switch to a monthly charge for having a grinder pump, what services would the monthly charge cover? How many trips or calls would this include?

That is something we could determine as part of our policy. It could include a certain number of calls per month per pump or could cover certain types of maintenance. It could also exclude any issues with the pumps that are determined to have been caused by misuse.

11. What is the average number of service calls on grinder pumps per month for rate making purposes?

It varies from 1-5 and the average number of calls per month is 1.7.

12. Will we have to replace any grinder pumps soon?

Not that Crossroads is aware of.

13. Have we already had to purchase grinder pumps to replace old ones?

Response from Hydrosource: We have one brand new grinder pump that we use as a "loaner pump." We show 10 pumps that have been sold to Rollingwood in the last 4 years, including the loaner pump.

14. How did the city get ownership of the grinder pumps at homes?

We are looking into this question.

15. Do we have easements on the grinder pump stations on every lot?

No.

16. Does our code require for the city to install the grinder pump?

Section 22-4 of the City's Code of Ordinances states: If a grinder pump is necessary, as determined by the director of public works or other designated agent of the city, the property owner shall install a grinder pump approved by the director of public works or other designated agent of the city. Thereafter, the city may repair and replace subsequent grinder pumps to serve the property in accordance with policies and budgets adopted from time to time by the city council, provided that the property owner or other person with appropriate authority grants to the city's agents permission to enter the property for such purpose.

17. Are the grinder pump impellers made of rubber?

We are working on getting an answer to this.

Action Requested:

To discuss and consider the recommendation from the Utility Commission regarding grinder pump maintenance and replacement.

Fiscal Impacts:

The fiscal impact will be determined based on what is adopted by City Council regarding grinder pump maintenance and replacement.

Attachments:

N/A